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appropriated to be reimbursed from proceeds of the sale of the surplus reservation lands (U.S. Statutes XXXIV 1907:1015, 1035). Allotment surveys and work on the irrigation projects were carried on during the two years following the enactment of the legislation (U.S. Comm. Ind. Affairs 1908:61; 1909:4–5). Irrigation construction provided an additional source of labor and income for many Indians.

The last annuities under the agreement of 1896 were paid in 1908. Henceforth Indian rations and aid were dependent upon tribal income, reimbursable government appropriations, and occasional relief measures. The statistics from the agents' reports for the next few years give a picture of continuing economic progress for the tribe as a whole.

The First World War relieved some of the pressure on reservation resources —good weather and abundant crops prevailed generally until 1917; livestock and produce found a ready market at high prices; and many Blackfeet were drawn into the armed forces, thereby reducing the local labor force. But all of this does not reflect accurately the condition of individuals. A process was going on that was slowly segmenting the population.

First, the population was growing—from 2,063 in 1905 (U.S. Board Ind. Comm. 1905:facing 16) to 2,957 in 1920—and becoming increasingly hybridized. White men were marrying the Indians' daughters. The full-blood Blackfeet loved the grandchildren these marriages produced, but they were "half-breeds," and hard to accept as "real Indians." Of the total, in 1920, less than half, or 1,141 persons, were full-bloods, while the balance were mixed. Among the mixed-blood population, 956 were ½ or less Indian (U.S. Comm. Ind. Affairs 1920:67). Secondly, the individually owned herds were growing and the returns from this business were high, but as the superintendent wrote in 1918, 3 percent of the tribe owned 95 percent of the stock when he reported for duty in 1915 (U.S. Congress Sen. Report 451 1918:3). An investigator for the Board of Indian Commissioners, in November of 1918, found that the full-bloods were divided as to their capabilities as stockmen. He reported that "about one-third of the 300 and more full-blood families is incapable of handling cattle." Another third probably could become cattlemen if properly instructed and supervised, and the balance of the full-bloods were doing well at the industry. A number of mixed-bloods had built prosperous looking ranches and had had "marked success at this business" (U.S. Board Ind. Comm. 1918:352–353).

Other forces were already at work that were to alter the uneven progress of the Blackfeet. Beginning in 1917, the Indian Bureau began pressing for the rapid reduction of Indian dependency by the removal of "competent" Indians from trust status (U.S. Comm. Ind. Affairs 1917:3–5). By 1920, 1,011 Blackfeet had been awarded fee patent title to 312,250 acres (U.S. Comm. Ind. Affairs 1920:171) under a policy that was to result in the alienation of reservation lands and the creation of a large number of landless Indians.

A drought cycle began in 1917 and continued for four years (U.S. Board Ind. Comm. 1921:55; Whetstone 1956:145–146). The end of the war, in 1917, resulted in the loss of markets. The drought and falling prices brought bankruptcy to both cattlemen and farmers in this part of Montana by 1919 and 1920. Veterans

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returned to swell the labor force. The Blackfeet shared in this change. The white homesteaders and cattlemen could abandon their places and go elsewhere; the Indian could not and had to rely again upon the government (U.S. Board Ind. Comm. 1921:56). The Indian, however, did have the agency to turn to, an advantage not shared by the white man. During the winter of 1920–1921 rations were issued to "over 2,000, or about two-thirds of the entire population" (U.S. Comm. Ind. Affairs 1922:12). Several informants reported that their families and friends were ruined at this time. A few were able to make a comeback, but many abandoned their ranches and did not try again.

In 1919, a second allotment of reservation lands was authorized in the annual appropriation bill for the Bureau of Indian Affairs (U.S. Statutes XLI 1919:16–17). After this no further allotments in severalty were made to the Blackfeet Indians.

The Blackfeet generally were dependent again. Thirty-five years of attempted economic readaptation were behind them. They had tried farming and found it unrewarding. They had found satisfaction in stock raising, but only a few were able to succeed at this in the face of cold winters, periods of drought, and the fluctuating markets regulated by national and international conditions. Large numbers of younger men had been employed in seasonal labor, railway and irrigation construction work, harvesting and ranch labor and had served in the armed forces. These jobs provided some cash income but little training for long-range adjustment. Unused allotments were leased to others to provide another small cash return to the Indian owner. Many people depended entirely upon the rations issued and the cash that could be earned by wage work or leasing of land.

Periodic crop failures and price fluctuations made it difficult for the Indian to understand or to develop faith in long-range plans. Each government program offered future rewards and security, but the promised rewards never materialized; the only tangible things were cash, rations, and relief. The white man's values of thrift and hard work had been developed and maintained by a better than average experience of success; few Blackfeet, by 1920, had experienced enough consistent reward to become imbued with these values. Every ten years or so their best efforts had resulted in failure.

1920–1935 The next fifteen years were in many ways a repetition of the the past, and reinforced more than they changed the expectation patterns. Montana farmers, generally, experienced a severe depression during this time (Montana Almanac 1957:122) and this was capped by the national depression and the droughts of the Dust Bowl years that began in 1929 and 1930 (Toole 1959:240).

In 1921 a new and dedicated agent, Frank C. Campbell, began a "Five Year Program" of subsistence farming and economic development financed by reimbursable Indian bureau funds. He visited each Indian home and by consultation won support for his program. The Blackfeet were given a sense of participating in the planning of their own economy. The agent consulted with them and made a place for indigenous leaders with whom the people could discuss and resolve their problems (U.S. Board Ind. Comm. 1923:47; 1925:22–23).